

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claim 1. (currently amended) An information providing apparatus for providing a desired information screen by making selection from icons respectively assigned to information screens, comprising:

operation information input means inputted with operation information based on selection operation; and

switching means for switching a menu screen on which the icons are arranged, to an information screen of a selected one of the icons, with a predetermined transit screen inserted therebetween, in response to the operation information, characterized in that

the switching means gradually enlarges the selected icon on the transit screen, to zoom in on the icon, and gradually fades display of the selected icon on the transit screen to switch this display to display of the information screen;

wherein the information screen, the transit screen, and the menu screen display a title indicating a presently focused icon in an upper portion of each screen.

Claim 2. (canceled)

Claim 3. (currently amended) An information providing apparatus for providing a desired information screen by making selection from icons respectively assigned to information screens, characterized in that

the icons are group icons respectively assigned to groups each grouping a plurality of information screens,

the information providing apparatus comprises operation information input means

inputted with operation information based on selection operation, and switching means for switching a menu screen in an upper layer on which the group icons are arranged, to a first menu screen in a layer lower than a selected group icon, with a predetermined first transit screen inserted therebetween, and

the switching means gradually enlarges the selected group icon on the first transit screen, to zoom in onto the group icon, and gradually fades display of the selected icon onto which the display is zooming in, on the transit screen, to switch the display to display of the first menu screen in the lower layer;

wherein the information screen, the transit screen, and the menu screen display a title indicating a presently focused icon in an upper portion of each screen.

Claim 4. (canceled)

Claim 5. (previously presented) An apparatus according to claim 3, characterized in that the group icon in the lower layer has a second menu screen in a much lower layer, on which group icons are further arranged, and

the switching means switches the first menu screen in the lower layer on which the group icons are arranged, to the second menu screen in the lower layer of the selected group icon, with a predetermined second transit screen inserted therebetween, in response to the operation information, gradually enlarges the selected group icon on the transit screen to zoom in on the group icon, and gradually fades display of the group icon onto which the display is zooming in, on the second transit screen, to switch the display to display of the second menu screen in the lower layer.

Claim 6. (canceled)

Claim 7. (currently amended) An information providing apparatus for providing a desired information screen by making selection from icons respectively assigned to information screens, comprising:

operation information input means inputted with operation information based on selection operation; and

switching means for switching the information screen to a menu screen on which the icons are arranged, with a predetermined transit screen inserted therebetween, in response to the operation information, characterized in that

the switching means gradually minifies enlarged display of an icon corresponding to the information screen, to zoom out onto the menu screen from display which has zoomed in on the icon, and gradually fades display of the information screen to switch the display of the information screen to display of a corresponding icon;

wherein the information screen, the transit screen, and the menu screen display a title indicating a presently focused icon in an upper portion of each screen.

Claim 8. (canceled)

Claim 9. (currently amended) An information providing apparatus for providing a desired information screen by making selection from icons respectively assigned to information screens, characterized in that

the icons are group icons respectively assigned to groups each grouping a plurality of information screens,

the information providing apparatus comprises operation information input means inputted with operation information based on selection operation, and switching means for switching a menu screen in a lower layer on which the group icons are arranged, to a first menu screen in a layer upper than the selected group icon, with a predetermined first transit screen inserted therebetween, and

the switching means gradually minifies a group icon corresponding to a menu in the lower layer, to zoom out from the group icon, and gradually fades display of the menu screen in the lower layer, to switch the display of the menu screen in the lower layer to display of the group icon corresponding to the menu screen in the lower layer;

wherein the information screen, the transit screen, and the menu screen display a title indicating a presently focused icon in an upper portion of each screen.

Claim 10. (canceled)

Claim 11. (previously presented) An apparatus according to claim 9, characterized in that the group icon in the upper layer has a second menu screen in a much upper layer, on which group icons are further arranged, and

the switching means switches the first menu screen in the upper layer, on which the group icons are arranged, to the second menu screen in the upper layer of a selected group icon, with a predetermined second transit screen inserted therebetween, in response to the operation information, gradually minifies the selected group icon on the transit

screen to zoom out from the group icon, and gradually fades display of the first menu screen to switch the first menu screen to a corresponding second menu screen.

Claims 12-21. (canceled)

Claim 22. (currently amended) An information providing method for providing a desired information screen by making selection from icons assigned to information screens, comprising:

an operation information input step of being inputted with operation information based on selection operation; and

a switching step of switching a menu screen on which the icons are arranged, to an information screen of an icon selected from the icons, with a predetermined transit screen inserted therebetween, in response to the operation information, characterized in that

in the switching step, the selected icon is gradually enlarged on the transit screen, to zoom in on the icon, and display of the selected icon on the transit screen is gradually faded to switch this display to display of the information screen;

wherein the information screen, the transit screen, and the menu screen display a title indicating a presently focused icon in an upper portion of each screen.

Claim 23. (canceled)

Claim 24. (currently amended) An information providing method for providing a desired information screen by making selection from icons assigned to information screens,

characterized in that

the icons are group icons respectively assigned to groups each grouping a plurality of information screens,

the information providing method comprises an operation information input step of being inputted with operation information based on selection operation, and a switching step of switching a menu screen in an upper layer on which the group icons are arranged, to a first menu screen in a lower layer of a selected group icon, with a predetermined first transit screen inserted therebetween, and

in the switching step, the selected group icon is gradually enlarged on the first transit screen, to zoom in onto the group icon, and display of the selected icon onto which the display is zooming in is gradually faded on the transit screen, to switch the display to display of the first menu screen in the lower layer;

wherein the information screen, the transit screen, and the menu screen display a title indicating a presently focused icon in an upper portion of each screen.

Claim 25. (canceled)

Claim 26. (previously presented) A method according to claim 24, characterized in that

the group icon in the lower layer has a second menu screen in a much lower layer, on which icons are further arranged, and

in the switching step, the first menu screen in the lower layer on which the group icons are arranged, is switched to the second menu screen in the lower layer of the

selected group icon, with a predetermined second transit screen inserted therebetween, in response to the operation information, and the selected group icon on the transit screen is gradually enlarged to zoom in on the group icon, and display of the group icon onto which the display is zooming in is gradually faded on the second transit screen, to switch the display to display of the second menu screen in the lower layer.

Claim 27. (canceled)

Claim 28. (currently amended) An information providing method for providing a desired information screen by making selection from icons assigned to information screens, comprising:

an operation information input step of being inputted with operation information based on selection operation; and

a switching step of switching the information screen to a menu screen on which the icons are arranged, with a predetermined transit screen inserted therebetween, in response to the operation information, characterized in that

in the switching step, enlarged display of the icon corresponding to the information screen is gradually minified, to zoom out onto the menu screen from display which has zoomed in on the icon, and display of the information screen is gradually faded to switch the display of the information screen to display of the corresponding icon;

wherein the information screen, the transit screen, and the menu screen display a title indicating a presently focused icon in an upper portion of each screen.

Claim 29. (canceled)

Claim 30. (currently amended) An information providing method for providing a desired information screen by making selection from icons respectively assigned to information screens, characterized in that

the icons are group icons respectively assigned to groups each grouping a plurality of information screens,

the information providing method comprises an operation information input step of being inputted with operation information based on selection operation, and a switching step of switching a menu screen in a lower layer on which the group icons are arranged, to a first menu screen in a layer upper than a selected group icon, with a predetermined first transit screen inserted therebetween, and

in the switching step, the group icon corresponding to a menu in the lower layer is gradually minified, to zoom out from the group icon, and display of the menu screen in the lower layer is gradually faded, to switch the display of the menu screen in the lower layer to display of the group icon corresponding to the menu screen in the lower layer;

wherein the information screen, the transit screen, and the menu screen display a title indicating a presently focused icon in an upper portion of each screen.

Claim 31. (canceled)

Claim 32. (previously presented) A method according to claim 30, characterized in that the group icon in the upper layer has a second menu screen in a much upper layer, on which

group icons are further arranged, and

in the switching step, the first menu screen in the upper layer, on which the group icons are arranged, is gradually switched to the second menu screen in the upper layer of a selected group icon, with a predetermined second transit screen inserted therebetween, in response to the operation information, the selected group icon is gradually minified on the transit screen, to zoom out from the group icon, and display of the first menu screen is gradually faded to switch display from the first menu screen to a corresponding second menu screen.

Claims 33-42. (canceled)